Hope that Anchors Us

Facing the end of life, whether for ourselves or someone we love, can stir fear, sadness and deep questions about what lies ahead. Yet, in these moments, we are called to cling to a hope far greater than anything this world offers. Christian hope is not just a wish for things to improve; it is a certainty, rooted in a person who will never fail us. Our hope rests in the One who guarantees it—Jesus Christ, who holds our future in His hands.

So how do we truly live out this hope, especially when suffering weighs heavy?

Let us use the letters of the word "hope" to reflect more deeply on the assurance Jesus has given us.

Holding Fast to Christ

Our hope is not in vague ideas but in Jesus Christ: God who took on flesh, loved us to the end, and conquered death. When life's final chapter feels uncertain, He remains our sure and steadfast anchor. We are held by a God who keeps His promises. "The mystery of the Redemption of the human person is in an astonishing way rooted in the loving involvement of God with human suffering. That is why we can entrust ourselves to God and to convey this certainty in faith to the person who is suffering and fearful of pain and death."[1]

Overcoming Death

Through His resurrection, Jesus Christ, overcame death and gave us the hope of joining Him in eternal life. Eternal life is a relationship with our Lord who does not die, who is Life and Love itself. "Death is a decisive moment in the human person's encounter with God the Savior."[2] Thanks to the grace of Christ, death is not the end of life but a promise of communion with God. This is the glorious future awaiting us, and the great hope that steadies us even now when we are suffering.

Persevering in Solidarity

The Gospel is not just information; it transforms. It changes our life and enables us to act. Since we know who holds our tomorrow, we can face today's fears with courage. This hope reshapes how we face suffering. It means living our final days not in despair, but with joy, offering our pain as prayer and witness.

This hope is not just for us; it is a light we pass to others. In hospice rooms, family conversations, and quiet acts of care for others, we become living reminders that no life is beyond God's reach. "The scene of the Cross provides a way of understanding that even when it seems that there is nothing more to do there remains much to do, because 'remaining' by the side of the sick is a sign of love and of the hope that it contains."[3] Together, we can build communities anchored in solidarity that no illness or grief can destroy. We believe that every human

life, to the very last breath, has inestimable value and demands our protection and care.

Embracing Suffering

Jesus did not just observe human suffering—He entered into it. Our God chose to become like us! Love Himself chose to suffer with us, and that changes everything. Even when we feel alone, He is there, whispering, "I am with you." Our suffering becomes meaningful when united to Christ's suffering on the Cross. When we unite our pain with His, it becomes a share in God's redeeming work, a mystery where our deepest wounds become vessels of grace. This is the scandal of our faith: a God who did not spare Himself so that we would know we are never abandoned.

Isaiah the prophet tells us, "They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (Is. 40:31). In life's hardest moments, let us fix our eyes on our Lord Jesus Christ. He walks this path with us, redeems our struggles, and promises a dawn where every tear is wiped away. May His hope light our way, guiding us and our loved ones to our heavenly home with Him.

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[1] *Samaritanus bonus,* Conclusion.
[2] Ibid, V, 10.
[3] Ibid, II.

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